

D. A. W. WAR TRACTS

Number 5

by
Houston Stewart Chamberlain.

In these grave and solemn days there is no room for elaborate rhetoric, but only for facts,—and nothing but facts. Beside the sacrifice of so many lives for the existence and safety of their country, even the eloquence of a silver-tongued orator would sound empty.

How can we arrive at the intellectual and moral facts?

The appalling fact of a world at war we have constantly before us, but where is the fact that forms the inner reason of this war? Who has brought this war about? Of course, that it was she who Germany's enemies pretend, of course, that it was she who broke the peace, and that Europe will not be at rest until Germany has been annihilated.

Where must we look for the origin of this wild idea? How is it possible to hide the obvious truth, "the fact" from the eyes of the millions? To state something to be a fact, means that it is a truth. An untrue fact is a contradiction in terms and therefore a thing of nought. But such a phantom exercises sometimes a great power over the imagination of men, when for instance, as has been the case in these latter years,

the press, that powerful instrument for the spreading of truth becomes, in the hands of a few unscrupulous persons, a tool for the dissemination of false statements.

We see the proof of this contention day by day in the columns of the papers. Despicable, however, as the use of the press for spreading false reports may be, it is almost harmless compared with attempts to shape the public opinion of whole nations by cunningly planned lies.

Far be it from me to pretend that the statesmen of former times were always walked in the paths of strict honesty; but then the crafty was met by the crafty, the cunning was outwitted by the cunning. In our days, however, it is the unsuspecting masses that are grossly misled.

It is an established fact that at the present time no statesman can afford to disregard the importance of public opinion. To carry on a war is impossible—west of the Russian frontier at any rate—unless wide sections of the nation are convinced of its necessity.

But since no civilized people would wantonly wish for war, they must be imbued with the growing idea of its necessity. And here a terrible abyss opens before us, for lo!—the clever lie can act as strongly as the truth, if it is believed!

It is sufficient to get possession of a certain number of widely read and therefore influential papers and to place them under a uniform management. Within a few years the desired end will be attained.

Misleading of the people has perhaps never before in the world's history been schemed and carried through in such a crafty, shameless and iniquitous way as the misleading of the world with regard to Germany by a powerful English Press Bureau.

It is this deception which forms the real cause of the present war. From the beginning England has been the driving force. Note her military plans found at Brussels dating back to 1906. It was to England's interest that the continental war should break out. It was again England that brought the estrangement between Russia and Germany, and it was also England which incessantly nursed in France the idea of revenge against Germany. Such a policy could only be rendered possible by a systematic and diligent deception of the people, as to their real interests, a deception which was carried out in cold blood by a handful of men who, a number of years ago, initiated this course with evil intent.

The impetus was given by a king; the intellectual capacity was furnished by a soulless, astute statesman, acting on the principle that in state affairs hypocrisy and lies are the best arms; the "management" of the misleading was entrusted to a skilful man of the press who was ready to advocate any opinion as long as he profited by it.

I have sometimes asked why the German people did not whip this base villain across the frontier of their country. The reply given was always: "There is no law against lying."

Germany was the only country that sincerely wanted to preserve peace.

In this respect my testimony may be of some value:

For 45 years I have associated with Germans, for the last 30 years I have lived continually in German countries. The love of the German way of living and thinking, of German science and art sharpened my eyes, but my judgment remained strictly impartial, and many things which displeased me, when first I set foot upon German soil, I have not been able to get accustomed to yet. Connected with France since earliest childhood and related to England by ties of blood, I remained free from prejudice.

And after all this time I can but say:

In the whole domain of Germany there has during the last 43 years not been a single person who wanted war, not one!

Any one who asserts the contrary is—either with or without his knowledge—speaking an untruth.

It has been my good fortune to know Germans from all the various districts and of all classes, from His Majesty the Emperor down to the worthy artisans with whom I have been in daily intercourse. I have known intimately *statesmen*, teachers, men of science, merchants, bankers, *officers*, engineers, poets, journalists, public functionaries, artists, but never have I met with any one among them who was bellicose.

In England, on the contrary, I found during my last visits in 1907 and 1908 everywhere a frightful blind hatred prevailing against Germany and the impatient expectation of a war of annihilation.

The absence of any animosity against foreign nations is a striking trait of the German character.

Germans usually err rather on the side of an exaggerated appreciation of the merits of other nations. Moreover, every German knows that, in view of the geographical position of his country, he has much to fear and little to hope in case of a war.

How then could a people in whose country industry, commerce and science have during the last 43 years reached an ever increasing degree of prosperity and development, be expected to desire a war which might destroy all the fruits of its labor?

And now, allow me to say only

a few words about Kaiser Wilhelm.

I have not met the emperor often, but whenever I did see him, it happened under especially favorable circumstances, outside of court-ceremonial, affording an opportunity of exchanging our opinions freely without any fear of possible listeners. I feel convinced that I am not committing any indiscretion if I say that two traits in his character have always struck me as most notable, because they formed, so to speak the two "dominants" of all his feelings, thoughts and acts:

the deep and ever present feeling of his responsibility before God

and—in close connection with this feeling and indeed dependent on it—the energetic, impetuous will to preserve to Germany the blessing of peace. The power of Germany which owes so much to his personal care—was not created to bring on war, but on the contrary to force jealous evil-disposed neighbors to keep the peace.

Does not every act of the Kaiser prove it? Whenever during the last ten years the political situation became almost unbearable for Germany's national honor—and England did her best to bring about such conditions—it was he, the Kaiser, who insisted upon peace time and again.

There has been no such a thing as a war-party in Germany.

This is one of the ridiculous falsehoods spread by the Press.

Germany stood up in arms as one man when the Emperor called, because she knew the time had come for the defence of all that she held high.

Should God grant the German and Austrian arms victory,—then, but only then Europe will be granted a lasting peace, and the wish

Lieutenant-Colonel Edwin Emerson gave an illustrated lecture in Berlin on December 11th 1914, under the auspices of the American Institute and the German-American Trade Association, at which the American Ambassador, the American Consul-General and the larger part of the American Colony in Berlin, as well as many representatives of the financial, commercial and social life of that city were present.

Apart from his explanations of the photographic war-scenes exhibited, Colonel Emerson made the following statements:

"My presence at the front was entirely of a neutral character. I am here on leave of absence, and therefore the American government has no official interest whatever in my doings.

**As war-correspondent from a neutral country,
I could observe more freely and draw more unbiased conclusions,**

**than would have been possible perhaps,
if I had occupied an official position.**

"This leads me to speak of the question of neutrality. We have heard the word neutrality very often in the last few months. England is even said to have declared war against Germany only on account of the violation of Belgian neutrality, for England's self-appointed mission has ever been the protection of smaller peoples. We cannot help wondering what the Boers, the Persians and the Greek inhabitants of the little Island of Cyprus, recently annexed by England, must think of this.

"Speaking of neutrality, we Americans who know the history of our country, can't help recalling bitterly how England broke all principles of neutrality during the black days of our civil war, and with her help there were built, armed and sent out against such formidable corsairs as the 'Alabama,' which succeeded in just wiping out all our American shipping, thus fulfilling one of England's heart desires.

"But why go so far back to look for instances of England's observance of neutrality! We have our own times and experiences to go by. The first war event that I can remember as a little boy was the bombardment of Alexandria by the British. That was the time when the British, to the cry of 'Bravo, Condor!', first moved into neutral Egypt, where they have since remained.

Do you call that a regard for neutrality?

"Most of you probably remember the time when Dr. Jameson with several hundred armed Englishmen made his famous raid into the neutral Boer republic. When the German Emperor in a friendly telegram to President Krueger intimated what he thought of this breach of neutrality, England got so aroused that she mobilized and made a naval demonstration against Germany. Dr. Jameson since then has been rewarded by knighthood and other official British honors.

Do you call that a regard for neutrality?

"It is the same with Japan, now the ally of England.

"As correspondent I went through the Russian-Japanese war. I was there, when the Japanese without any kind of declaration of war invaded the neutral Korea, marched through it, and fought out the war in the neutral Manchuria, where the rest of the great Russian-Japanese war was fought out, always on neutral soil.

"I never heard then of England raising one word of protest against her ally's breaches of Chinese neutrality; on the contrary she supported them as she has likewise lately done in the case of Shantung, since the fall of Tsingtau.

"The truth is that England does not care a fig about any principles of neutrality whenever her own interests are concerned. After all neutrality is a mere international convention. What did we Americans care about the neutrality of Mexico when we occupied Veracruz, or of Nicaragua when we occupied that country, or of Columbia when we took the Panama canal zone?

"Just so Germany could not bother about technical observances of neutrality either in Luxembourg or in Belgium, when the fate of the German nation was at stake. It was a case then of national self-preservation, and Germany in this supreme hour of need simply did what her own best interest demanded at the moment.

Germany acts in this way, the papers term it a breach of neutrality, if England does it, it is called 'fair play.'

"When I was in Belgium a short time ago, I became fully persuaded from my own observation, that the so-called neutrality of Belgium towards Germany was nothing but a lying-in-wait of hostility. From a military point of view Germany had no choice when threatened with an attack East and West. No military commander would take the responsibility of laying his country open to a flank attack through a country known to be hostile.

"It may not be generally known here that it was owing to the American ambassador in Brussels that the same scenes were not enacted in that city as in Louvain. As a matter of fact, the mayor of Brussels, Marx by name, had given orders for the Brussels civil-guard to dig trenches and to fire upon the Germans, and they were restrained from doing this only by our ambassador, who went to the trenches and showed the would-be-soldiers the foolishness of such attempts to stop an army. Our ambassador also told me of the excellent impression that General Field-Marshal von der Goltz had made upon him, as Governor-General of Belgium, and said to me incidentally that official business in Brussels was transacted much more promptly and smoothly under the German administration, than it had been formerly by the Belgians.

**In Louvain there was unfortunately no
American consul to restrain the civil population
from firing upon the Germans from the
ambuscade of their houses.**

"Inhabitants of Louvain admitted to me themselves that their firing at the Germans had been a terrible mistake. They would not have done it, they told me, had they not been secretly informed from Antwerp, that a sortie from that city had been successful, and that the Germans were in full retreat on Louvain. When then a small column of tired-out German soldiers happened to enter Louvain that same evening, the deluded populace thought that they were part of the completely routed and fleeing troops of the German army, and at once opened fire upon them.

"I would here as a military man further say that, if I were in war and a hostile civilian population were to fire on my troops.

**I should proceed in the same way as the
Germans did in Louvain.**

Our American soldiers always did the same in the Philippines.

"As a literary man I naturally regret that the historically valuable library in Louvain happened to be burned with other buildings, but in war, fire and sword are always at work, and regrettable losses of valuable things take place in all belligerent countries.

"I was in Veracruz this last spring when our American marines completely destroyed the valuable library of the Mexican naval academy. Our officers of course regretted this afterwards very much.

**Just as the English now are using
Hindoos, Mohammedans, Portuguese and Japanese
as cannon food
in their war with Germany,
so the English in their war with us
used the poor Hessians and the Indians of North America.**

"These savage redskins were directly incited by our British cousins to plunder and burn our colonial settlements, to murder and scalp our forefathers, men, women and children, and to ravish the unfortunate American women and girls of those times.

"Was it not Admiral Cockburn, then a young British ensign, who during England's second war with us himself set fire to our Capitol at Washington and to our Congressional Library? That war arose from one of those questions of neutrality, the non-observance of which on the part of England was too flagrant even for those crude days. Although we were a little people then, we had to go to war with England, because the English had fallen into a despicable practice, which has been resumed in these days, of taking Americans and neutrals off neutral ships, the overhauling of which on the high seas England has ever considered her special privilege.

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at the time of our war against Cuba,
during the American campaign last year, suffered much more from
hunger and deprivation than the people of Belgium are doing now."

Colonel Emerson then changed his subject to [the Eastern seat
of war and showed by means of photographic views the wanton
destruction of churches and property by the Russians, during their
short invasion of East Prussia early in August, and as a contrast
pointed to the pictures of the villages and their churches on Russian
territory now in the hands of the Germans.

Regarding the surprising readiness of the Russian armies at the opening of hostilities he had this to say:

"While I was at the front, I was surprised to notice amongst the
Russian prisoners men with features which were familiar to me from
the days of the Russian-Japanese war. I spoke to some of these
men whose home I knew to be on the Amur, far away near the
Chinese frontier. 'Did you come so far?' 'Yes!' was the answer.

'When did you start?' 'Early in June!'"

Colonel Emerson's concluding remarks contained praise and ad-
miration as a military man for the strategy of Field Marshal Hin-
denburg, commanding the German troops at the Eastern seat of
war in Russia, and for the pluck and bravery of the German troops
who turned a seeming defeat into a splendid victory against a nu-
merically overwhelming enemy.

His statements, which bore the marks of earnestness and con-
viction, were listened to with great attention, and frequently applauded.

German-American Trade Association, Berlin.

You will have seen from the pictures just shown of the way in which the German soldiers acted towards hungry children, how little truth there is to the cry that has been of the barbarism of the so-called German Huns. For an un-
 duced reader of history, it would have been in the highest
 astonishing to find that a civilized people, who have produced
 several centuries up to the beginning of August of this
 series of the most prominent thinkers, scholars, investigators,
 artists, composers, physicians, inventors, merchant princes,
 leaders and innumerable benefactors of mankind, should have
 so suddenly, after the 4th of August, transformed into brutal

Through the agency
 and at the instigation of the enemies of German
 foreign newspapers have published incredible accounts
 of cruelty and brutality
 and of violence towards women on the part
 of German officers and soldiers in the field.

I am, to be sure, only a single witness, but I should I
 bear testimony here to what I have seen with my own eyes.
 I was more than a month at the front. I have met and
 prisoners and have talked with many of these freely and apart
 their German guards. Not a single one complained to me
 human treatment on the part of the Germans, and I never
 single case of cruel behavior of German officers or soldiers to
 unless men. During this whole time, I saw no drunken soldiers
 abundance of wine, and often of the best, is
 in France.

Belgium and in northern France, I spoke
 although Belgian and French women and girls.
 I never made the complaint to me that